

Preparing for Massachusetts' New Graduation Requirements

A readiness planning webinar for district leaders

Thursday, August 20 | 10:00 AM



Presenters:

Lenworth Williamson, Senior Consultant for Education Strategies

Ana Archibald, Senior Consultant for Education Strategies

Recent Work in Massachusetts: Statewide Graduation Council Consulting Services



Partnered with state education leadership to facilitate Graduation Council process



Conducted landscape analysis of high school grad requirements across 49 states and Washington, D.C.



Supported the following stakeholder engagement activities

- 8 Listening Sessions with **400+ attendees**
- 3 student-specific sessions with **300+ attendees**
- Statewide Survey with **6,600+ responses**
- District Leader Survey with **100+ respondents**
- 5 Advisory Groups with **79 individuals and 23 sessions**
- Public Input Form with **800+ responses**
- 14 Statewide Graduation Council meetings

Today's Presenters



Ana Archibald
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Lenworth Williamson
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PCG has a large national footprint...



Local contracts in **49 states** and the District of Columbia



State-level contracts in **38 states**



Wide variety of district clients, including **17 of the 20** largest districts in the US

Our education practice helps systems **optimize resources** and **improve student outcomes** at scale

...and a strong local presence in Massachusetts.



Boston Roots

PCG is headquartered in Boston and has spent decades serving Massachusetts schools, districts, and state agencies.

200+ school districts

PCG has provided consulting services to over 200 school districts across the state, including most Gateway cities.

\$675 million

PCG has recovered over \$675 million in school-based health services back to the Commonwealth since 1992.

30,000+ IEPs created annually

PCG has provided case management solutions and special education consulting services in MA since 2002.



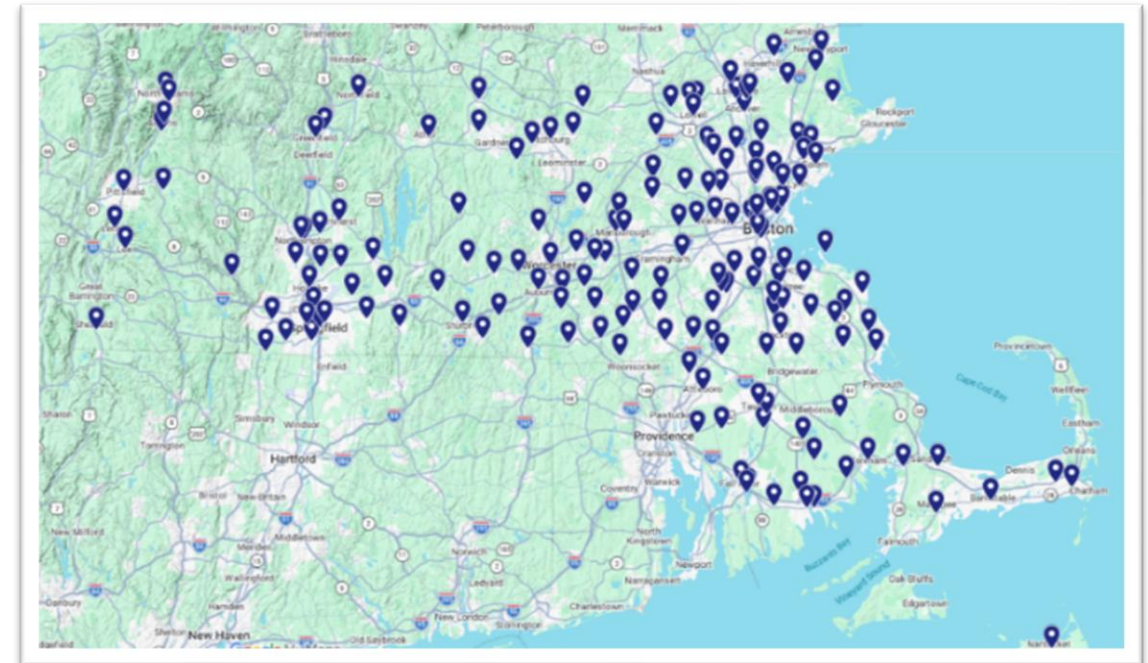
About Public Consulting Group (PCG)

Preparing for Massachusetts' New Graduation Requirements

Public Consulting Group (PCG) provides “Solutions that Matter” to local and state education agencies.

- For 40 years, we have helped our school districts and state agencies with the following, with the **goal of improving outcomes for all students**:
 - Establish and **streamline systems and processes**
 - Maximize and optimize resources to **reduce costs and increase return on investments**
 - Develop programs, curriculum, instructional resources, and professional development to **strengthen educational practices**
- Since 2018, PCG has supported DESE in expanding **career connected learning** opportunities and initiatives across the Commonwealth

DISTRICTS ENGAGED IN PCG'S POSTSECONDARY READINESS PROGRAMMING



Today's Focus

During this webinar we will...

- 1 Explore a framework to help coordinate and prepare for the coming changes
- 2 Identify the key questions district leaders should be asking
- 3 Discuss who needs to be on your district's implementation readiness team

Note-catcher

tinyurl.com/PCGgrad



Level-Setting

Executive Order No. 639: Establishing a K-12 Statewide Graduation Council

The Council was co-chaired by Steve Zrike, Secretary of Education & Pedro Martinez, DESE Commissioner

Recommendations

Legislation

Regulations

Today we will focus on this high-level question for districts:

How will we organize ourselves to understand and lead the change that is coming?

The Proposed Graduation Framework at a Glance

Primary Components

Foundational Coursework (MassCore)

End-of-Course Assessments

Postsecondary Planning (MyCAP)

Culminating Experience

Embedded Components

Financial Literacy

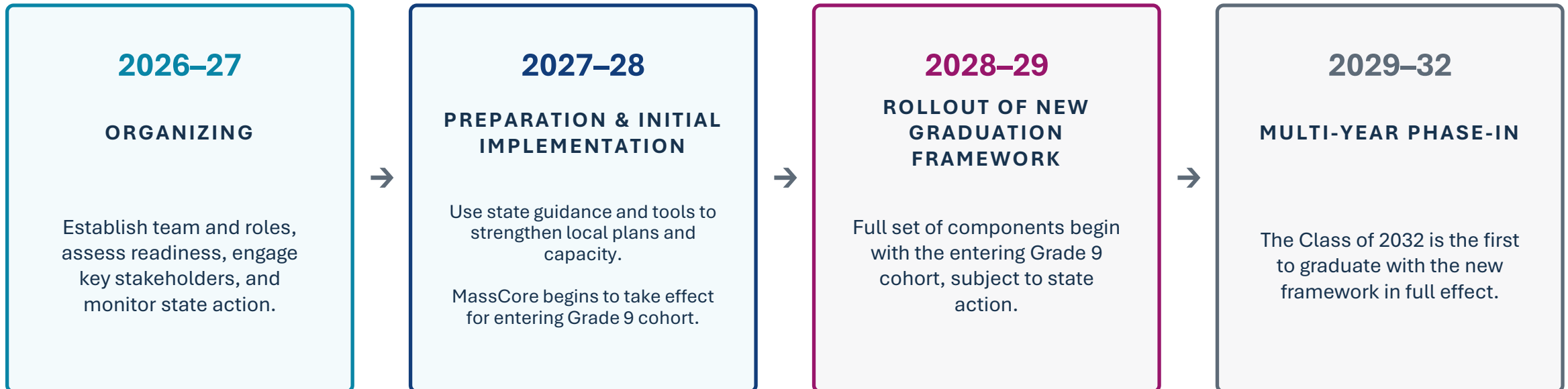
Work-Based Learning

FAFSA / MASFA

AI & Digital Literacy

Civic Readiness

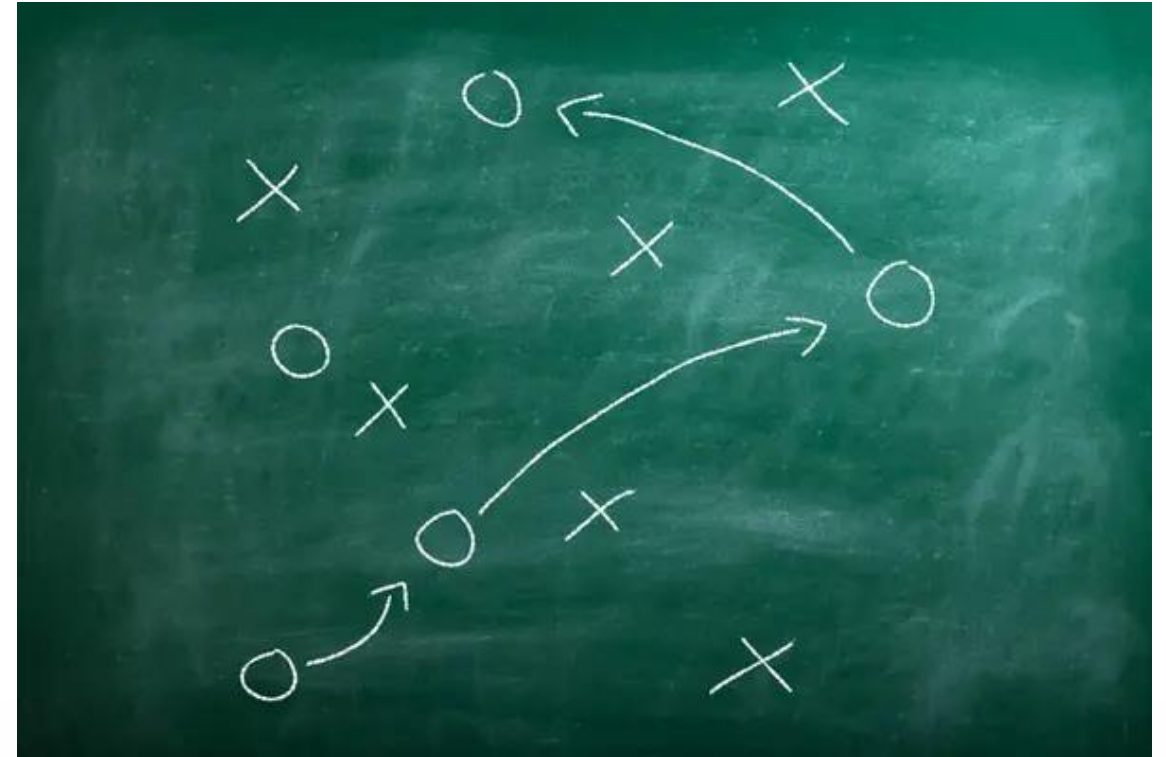
Phased Implementation Timeline (tentative)



Now is the time for districts to begin planning, preparing, and aligning ahead of implementation.

Key Question for District Leaders

How will we organize ourselves to understand and lead the change that is coming?



Planning Framework

Why – Who – How

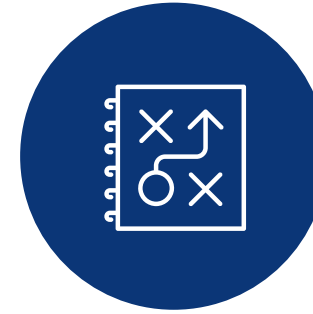
Framework Overview



Why



Who



How

Why are we doing this?

- What student outcomes do we want this work to advance?
- How does the proposed graduation framework connect to our district's existing priorities?
- How does it relate to our district's:
 - Vision of a Learner/Profile of a Graduate
 - Strategic Plan
 - Instructional Strategy
 - College and Career Readiness Work
 - Program of Study



Who needs to be involved?

Key Leadership Questions

1. Who has the authority to sponsor and remove barriers for this work?
2. Who will coordinate the work across departments?
3. Who best understands how these changes will impact our district's people and practices?
4. Whose perspective is needed to ensure that planning is inclusive?
5. Which people need to be core team members, and which can serve as advisors and contributors?
6. Who best understands how this change will impact our SWD, MLL, and other special populations?



Who needs to be involved?

We suggest that decision-making assumes a tiered structure:

EXECUTIVE SPONSOR

Accountable senior leader who sets direction, removes barriers, and keeps the work connected to district strategy.

CORE READINESS TEAM

Small cross-functional group that coordinates the work, synthesizes information, and prepares recommendations for decisions.

ADVISORY VOICES

School leaders, school committee, educators, students, families, partners, and specialists engaged at defined points to provide feedback and share perspective.

Who needs to be involved?

Equity check: be sure to include people who most closely understand effects on students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and other student groups.

Direction	Learning	Student pathways	Access and support	Systems
• Superintendent or designee • Strategy and cabinet leadership	• Academics and curriculum • Secondary programming • School leaders and educators	• Counseling and advising • College and career readiness • Student life and partnerships • Students	• Special education • Multilingual learners • Family engagement	• Data and assessment • HR and talent • Operations and scheduling • Finance • Communications

Who needs to be involved?

Example: Graduation Requirements Readiness RACI Matrix

Readiness Activities	Superintendent	Leadership Team	Principals	Teachers	Staff	Students	Families
1. Interpret New Requirements	A	R	C	C	I	I	I
2. Assess Current-State Readiness	I	A/R	R	R	R	C	C
3. Align District Policies & Procedures	A	R	C	C	C	I	I
4. Assess Student & School-Level Impacts	I	A	R	R	R	C	C
5. Align Academic Programs & Student Pathways	I	A	R	R	C	C	I
6. Prepare Data & Student Tracking Systems	I	A	C	C	R	I	I
7. Prepare School Leaders, Teachers & Staff	I	A	R	R	R	I	I
8. Develop Student & Family Communications	A	R	C	C	C	C	R
9. Establish Implementation Oversight	A	R	C	I	C	I	I

R = Responsible
 A = Accountable
 C = Consulted
 I = Informed

How will we organize and manage this?

Develop a meeting series with Core Readiness Team

- Regular strategy and steering sessions to review data, address roadblocks, and align on direction
- More frequent workflow management meetings to plan specifics and move the work forward

Identify key milestones and decision points upfront

- Phased timeline anchored to timeline for implementation of components
- Built in decision points

Address and revisit key questions

- How will schools, students, families, and community partners inform and engage in the work?
- How will roles and decision-making responsibilities be clarified?
- How will progress be monitored?
- How will findings be documented?
- How will diverse perspectives be incorporated into decision-making?
- How will updates be communicated internally?

Common Pitfalls

What to Watch for

WATCH FOR One department owns the work



RESPOND Build a cross-functional readiness team.

WATCH FOR Work begins without governance



RESPOND Establish sponsorship, roles, and decision rights early.

WATCH FOR Solutions come before diagnosis



RESPOND Map current conditions before designing new structures.

WATCH FOR A new initiative is created



RESPOND Connect the work to existing district strategy and priorities.

WATCH FOR Technical compliance dominates



RESPOND Keep student, family, and staff experience visible.

WATCH FOR Input is gathered without clarity



RESPOND Define how stakeholder perspectives will inform decisions.

Time to Convene Your Readiness Team

Convening Your Readiness Team

1

Name the sponsor

Identify the senior leader accountable for initiating the work and removing barriers

2

Confirm the team

Select the small cross-functional group that will coordinate readiness and connect key functions

3

Schedule a kickoff conversation

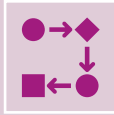
Convene the group to discuss the Why, Who, How framework and determine next steps

Suggested items for first meeting

1. What student outcomes do we want this work to advance?
2. What do we currently understand, and what is uncertain?
3. Who else needs to participate in this work?
4. What existing initiatives and structures should we map?
5. How will we monitor and apply upcoming state guidance?

Wrap Up

Reminders for Attendees



You do not need every implementation answer to begin this work, but you do need...

A shared purpose

The right people at the table

A clearly articulated approach



PCG can support your district in moving from awareness to organized readiness



Next steps – sharing recording, reach out to us if you have questions or would like to talk through your district's readiness approach



Reach out: Lenworth Williamson - lwilliamson@pcgus.com
Ana Archibald - aarchibald@pcgus.com

How PCG can support district readiness

Flexible support that meets districts where they are.

Readiness launch

Facilitate leadership alignment, establish governance, and design the planning cadence.

Current-state assessment

Map policies, programs, capacity, data, and gaps across the proposed framework.

Stakeholder engagement

Design focused engagement with staff, students, families, school leaders, and partners.

Implementation roadmap

Translate findings and state guidance into phased priorities, milestones, and responsibilities.

Change management

Develop communications, learning supports, decision tools, and progress-monitoring routines.

How PCG can support district readiness

District support examples

Component-Specific Support

- **MassCore**
 - Course and staffing audit
 - Customized options for scaling based on resources and programs of study
- **MyCAP**
 - Scope and sequence development
 - Implementation coaching
- **Culminating Experience**
 - Design workshops
 - Professional development

Cross-Component Support

- Tailored phased **implementation roadmap**
- **Resource allocation** analysis and strategy development
- **Master schedule and program redesign** aligned to new requirements



Solutions that Matter